

**Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal**

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# NEWS- RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Illinois State Fire Marshal warns consumers not to use banned fireworks this July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday**

*Enjoy those that are conducted by trained professionals*

**CHICAGO** – The rockets’ red glare and bombs bursting in air make a great visual, but exploding fireworks in the hands of untrained professionals or children can be a recipe for bodily harm and death to users and spectators, according to the Office of the Illinois State Fire Marshal (OSFM). OSFM recommends that the public celebrate July 4th by enjoying professional shows put on by trained individuals, as opposed to conducting makeshift displays using illegal fireworks.

“Every July 4th, we hear news about horrific injuries and fatalities caused by mishandled or faulty fireworks,” said Larry Matkaitis, Illinois State Fire Marshal. “The best alternative is to watch a professional display—from a safe distance—because there is simply no safe way to use consumer fireworks.”

In Illinois, fireworks are categorized into three groups:

### **Banned Fireworks**

- These are fireworks that explode when lit and include firecrackers (of any size or type), bottle rockets, sky rockets, roman candles, pin wheels, chasers, buzz bombs, missiles, and any other exploding items that are hand held.
- Anyone caught selling and/or using banned fireworks may be charged with a Class A misdemeanor.

### **Consumer Fireworks**

- A consumer that wants to purchase legal consumer fireworks must show a “permit” acquired from their local fire department stating they have attended a fireworks safety class.
- OSFM provides the materials and permits to fire departments that request them each year. It is the local fire department’s role to provide the safety training to consumers seeking to purchase and use consumer fireworks.
- OSFM “registers” vendors that sell fireworks as a business (usually found at roadside stands), however once someone has a registration from OSFM, they still cannot sell anything that is on the “banned” fireworks list.

- Consumer fireworks are among those permitted in Illinois and must be placed on the ground when lit; no hand-held consumer fireworks are approved in Illinois.
- Approved consumer fireworks include cones (including showers of sparks), fountains, and repeaters (also known as cakes). Single tube fountains must not contain more than 75 grams of gun powder; Cone fountains must not contain more than 50 grams of gun powder; and multiple-tube fountains must not contain more than 200 grams total of gun powder.
- Other approved devices include mines, comets, tubes, shells, fancy florals, and parachutes. These items are designed to produce low-level aerial effects, which are propelled into the air by a lift charge. Shells will burst at the peak of flight to create a display of stars, reports or other effects or leave a trail of sparks until exhausted.
- Only consumer fireworks retailers/distributors, who have registered with OSFM, may sell approved consumer fireworks to consumers who have and display a valid fireworks permit.

### **Novelty Fireworks**

- Novelty items are unregulated in Illinois and the sale and use of these items shall be permitted at all times. These include snake or glow worm pellets; smoke devices; trick noisemakers (known as party poppers, booby traps, snappers, trick matches, cigarette loads, and auto burglar alarms); sparklers; toy pistols, toy canes, toy guns, or other devices in which paper or plastic caps containing 0.25 grains or less of explosive compound are used.

For more information about fireworks safety, please visit [www.state.il.us/osfm](http://www.state.il.us/osfm) or [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).

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